

# ICRI MONITORING

## GLOBAL CORAL REEF MONITORING NETWORK – REEF CHECK

Co-Sponsored by IOC-UNEP-IUCN-World Bank

### Update of March to August 1999 PROGRESS REPORT

22 October 1999

This summary updates the report presented to the ICRI CPC delegates by the ICRI Secretariat in August.

#### New Summary Points

- The US State Department funding of US \$640,000 for UNEP (and SPREP) activities has been delivered and support of coral reef monitoring in the Micronesia is proposed for funds delivered to SPREP.
- UNEP (Agneta Nilsson) and IOC (Ned Cyr) have worked hard to develop a contract to fund GCRMN Coordination, but have had little support from 'the accountants'.
- The new Coordinator for the DFID (UK) project, Emma Whittingham, will arrive in Sri Lanka in early November for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase of GCRMN Node in South Asia (budget = GBP 300, 000 plus salary).
- The Packard Foundation have funded \$100,000 for the preparation of National status of reefs reports for East Malaysia, East Indonesia, the Philippines, Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. The reports are to assist in the preparation of the Western Pacific Biodiversity Conservation project.
- The socioeconomic manual is on track via Leah Bunce of NOAA, with 4 other specialist writers working on sections that will be edited into a working draft during a workshop in November. Japan has provided 2,080,000 Yen and IUCN have promised \$45,000 and UNEP a further \$10,000 for production, trials, training workshops and printing.
- The meeting to examine coral bleaching in the Arabian Region scheduled for Riyadh, Saudi Arabia has been postponed to 6 to 9 February 2000. A session to organise the formation of GCRMN Node activities has been scheduled.
- The proposal to the GEF for a Node in the Western Indian Ocean island states is now being finalised by the Indian Ocean Commission after it had stalled for a long time. The final appendix documents from participating countries are being prepared for final submission.
- The Chair of GCRMN STAC (Edgardo Gomez) and the Coordinator attended the Convention on Biological Diversity meeting at ICLARM in Manila (11, 13-OCT-99) to prepare a statement on the recent mass bleaching and mortality, with particular reference to global climate change.
- The Coordinator participated in the ICRAN coordination meeting in Geneva, 16,17-SEP-99 which will contain a bid to support the coordination of the GCRMN and additional funds to support key regional GCRMN coordinators based at UNEP offices in the Indian Ocean, East Asian Seas, SPREP in the Pacific and in the Caribbean.

**Middle East - Gulfs Region:** Coordinated activities are on hold until the meeting next February.

**Western Indian Ocean - Eastern African States Region:** If the GEF funding proposal by the Indian Ocean Commission for a Node in the island states is successful, existing monitoring activity will accelerate rapidly (funding requested for 3 years: GEF \$610,640; & co-financing COI:\$290,900 and Governments \$92,200; other projects \$900 - Total \$994,640). Considerable training and monitoring achieved. The CORDIO (Sida) project will provide an additional boost, especially in Eastern African states with approximately \$100,000 available to implement GCRMN Node activities.

**South Asia Region:** Emma Whittingham has been briefed in London and Paris and is ready to take up duties in Colombo. A major planning meeting is scheduled for mid-December, followed by development of a ReefBase type database and more training in biophysical and socioeconomic monitoring. Jason Rubens is being invited to the meeting to ensure a smooth transition.

**East Asian Seas Region:** No significant changes since last report. The UNEP Regional Coordinating Unit in Bangkok is restructuring the stalled GEF proposal for the South China Sea with considerable monitoring involved. The GEF is considering a medium sized project in central Vietnam with monitoring involved. The area will benefit from the Packard Foundation project to produce National Status reports in the Philippines, and East Malaysia and Indonesia.

**Pacific Region:** National status reports for Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, PNG and the Solomons will be produced in the next few months under Packard Foundation project.

James Aston of SPREP is proposing a Node for the Micronesian Regional Marine Research Consortium (FSM, Guam, Marshall Ids., Northern Marianas and Palau) using \$100,000 contributed by the US State Department.

The Director of the International Ocean Institute of University of the South Pacific, Robin South, is enthusiastic about coordinating a Node to include Kiribati, Tuvalu, Tonga and Samoa based in Fiji. The IOC is putting up internal funds to get it started and will work with the GCRMN to prepare a funding proposal for this key Node, possibly to the GEF.

Paul Jokiel of the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology (University of Hawaii) is coordinating coral reef monitoring in the Hawaiian region and there has been contact on how to integrate their activities with other GCRMN Nodes in the Pacific. A detailed monitoring plan is being developed. They will be requested to assist American Samoa.

Plans are firm for the meeting in Noumea 22 to 24 May 2000. SPREP and French Government are coordinating representation of countries which will be requested to provide National Status of Reefs reports. This meeting, the Packard project, and assistance from the University of the South Pacific will ensure many reports from the Pacific.

**Tropical Americas - Caribbean Region:** Allan Smith has demonstrated that considerable capacity and interest for a GCRMN Node exists in the Eastern Antilles, based out of St Lucia, and proposals are being developed. Similarly, Jaime Garzon-Ferreira based in Santa Marta, Colombia, has reported on a strong national monitoring program that could form the basis of a GCRMN Node incorporating Venezuela, Brazil, Ecuador and possibly countries of Central America.

DFID UK are considering mechanisms to further the GCRMN in the Caribbean, including assisting in the production of the socioeconomic manual.

Congratulations to Alessandra Vanzella-Khoury of UNEP Jamaica and husband Curtis for the birth son Simon on 24 September.

**Future:** The GCRMN requests assistance from ICRI CPC delegates to produce National Status of Coral Reef reports for all countries with reefs in the world. Our deadline for National reports is 31-MAY-99 so that we can use these as the basis for the next report: Status of Coral Reefs of the World: 2000.

Clive R. Wilkinson  
Coordinator, GCRMN  
22nd October 1999